

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06
OMB-01 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00 XMB-02
OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 IO-13 /101 W
-----038641 310033Z /14

R 301136Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LISBON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5251
INFO COMUSFORAZ
AMCONSUL OPORTO
AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 2342

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR PO
SUBJECT: AZORES BASE AGREEMENT

REF: (A) LISBON 1826, (B) LISBON 1898

1. SINCE MY ARRIVAL IN LISBON EARLY THIS MONTH I HAVE USED EVERY OCCASION TO CONVEY TO THE TOP LEADERSHIP HERE A SENSE OF URGENCY REGARDING THE NEED FOR A SPEEDY CONCLUSION OF A NEW LAJES BASE AGREEMENT. I EMPHASIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS MATTER IN MY INITIAL CALLS ON PRESIDENT EANES, PRIME MINISTER SOARES, THE FOREIGN MINISTER, THE MINISTER OF DEFENSE, AND DIRECTOR GENERAL IN FONMIN VILLAS BOAS (CHAIRMAN OF THE INTERMINISTERIAL COMMISSION ON THE BASE AGREEMENT). I REITERATED THE POINT MARCH 28 IN A ONE-ON-ONE LUNCH WITH PRIME MINISTER SOARES JUST AFTER HIS RETURN THIS WEEK FROM LATIN AMERICA. I ALSO PROMPTED SENATOR STAFFORD TO RAISE LAJES DURING THE CALL OF THE AMERICAN DELEGATION TO THE INTERPARLIAMENTARY UNION ON PRIME MINISTER SOARES ON MARCH 29. ON THE LATTER OCCASION, SOARES ASSURED THE CONGRESSIONAL GROUP THAT THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT

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HAD NO PROBLEM ABOUT CONCLUDING A NEW AGREEMENT AND WOULD MOVE FORWARD WITH SPEED TO DO SO. I WAS GRATIFIED THAT DURING THE SAME MEETING, FOREIGN MINISTER SA MACHADO STATED THAT THE NEXT AND "FINAL" MEETING OF THE INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMISSION WOULD BE HELD ON APRIL 4, AFTER WHICH THE GOVERNMENT EXPECTED TO BE ABLE TO PRESENT ITS RESPONSE TO THE U.S. PROPOSAL.

2. I NOW HAVE THE FEELING THAT THE GOP HAS BEEN DULY SENSITIZED TO THE NEED TO GET ITS ACT TOGETHER ON THE LAJES QUESTION AND I AM MILDLY OPTIMISTIC THAT THE LONG PHASE OF PORTUGUESE PROCRASTINATION ON LAJES, CAUSED BY THE CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT AND THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT'S WARINESS ABOUT THE AZOREAN ROLE IN ALL THIS, HAS COME TO AN END AND THAT WE WILL BE SEEING SOME FORWARD MOVEMENT ON LAJES DURING THE NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS.

3. WE WILL BE COMMENTING ON THE DEPARTMENT'S CONVERSATION WITH AMBASSADOR THEMIDO ON THIS SUBJECT BY SEPARATE TELEGRAM.
BLOOMFIELD

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NNN

Message Attributes

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